

Notes of meeting with Primary Teacher Training College Presidents 28th of October 2011 in St. Vincent's Centre Bridge room

Attendance: Elizabeth Mathews, Niall Keane, John Bosco Conama, Liam O'Dwyer, Michelle Goodwin, Interpreter (Michelle McNulty), Olivia Bree, Leah O'Toole, Sean Delaney, Ruby Morrow and Peter Kenny.

Introductions

Liam O'Dwyer set out the reason for the meeting, welcomed the four colleges representatives and all the attendees introduced themselves.

Context

Elizabeth set out the main recommendations of the paper submitted to CHOICE. The paper has also been submitted to the NCSE, Department of Education, the Teaching Council and the National Curriculum Council Authority (NCCA).

The next consultation for the Education Partnership Group on this paper is with the NCCA and the Teaching Council.

Response

The overall response to the paper and recommendations was positive with CHOICE suggesting that in principle, it is happy with the direction set out in the paper. In particular it agrees with the proposed use of one college to operate the initial intake and the capacity and existing resources of Trinity College (Centre for Deaf Studies) to be able to deliver the alternative modules, supervision and accreditation. Also, it was recognised that it would initially be a restricted qualification. Some concerns were raised around the employment prospects that would be available to qualified Deaf teachers afterwards, the costs of providing the supports to Deaf students and the use or not of the DARE points system. Also there was a new development with the reconfiguration of the fourth year in the colleges whereby the placement will now be spread over the four years which may cause some additional supervision difficulties especially for lectures in core subjects.

All of these issues were dealt with during the meeting in a manner which satisfied CHOICE. Elizabeth agreed to review again the issue of the costs. The colleges were keen to get an idea as to the numbers of potential students which it was agreed in the long term would be small, but could be large (6-8) initially due to mature students seeking entry. This appeared to be acceptable to CHOICE. The only residual issue not resolved was that of the assessment relating to teaching practice especially for the lecturers outside of the Centre for Deaf Studies who would have to assess students. The other issues raised were that of the complexity of the course (which was adequately dealt with), the possibility of an alternative point of entry ie via the 2 year higher diploma added to an initial degree and the goodwill and time that would be required to develop the new modules.

It was agreed that Elizabeth would revert to CHoICE on the resources and cost issues and following the planned meetings with the NCCA and the Teaching Council the group would meet with CHoICE again in the company of the NCCA and the Teaching Council.